

REMARKS

Claims 19-21, 23, 27 and 29 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Smith. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Applicant notes the pilot valve of Smith appears to be utilized for controlling the flow of water or a liquid. Accordingly, Smith fails to disclose a closure member that is displaceable by steam pressure from within a steam pressure vessel. For this reason alone, applicant submits that the rejection is improper, as a rejection based on anticipation must show each and every feature of the claim is found within the reference. In this case, Smith fails to disclose a steam pressure vessel or a closure member that is operable based on steam pressure. The rejection is therefore improper and must be withdrawn.

Applicant also notes that, in Smith, fluid ordinary flows in through passage 78 and out through passage 55. Accordingly, the conical valve disc 56 is located within the valve inlet path. In contrast, the closure member seals the discharge flow flange when it is placed in the closed position. Thus, Smith also fails to disclose a closure member that seals a discharge flow flange as claimed.

Further, claim 21 states that the closure member is displaceable between the closed disposition and an open disposition by a double-acting actuator, wherein the double-acting actuator includes a drive piston and a spindle that is connected to the drive piston and to the closure member, and wherein the spindle is connected to a side of the closure member that faces the inside of the steam pressure vessel and is the side to which the pressure of the steam is applied. In Smith, the stem is not connected to the side of the valve disc to which pressure is applied. Thus, Smith fails to disclose the double-acting actuator as claimed.

The remaining claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as being obvious in view of Smith alone or in view of Smith and various secondary references. With respect to the rejection of claims 28 and 38, applicant notes the Examiner takes the position that it would be obvious to use a larger flange size on the exit as opposed to the inlet in order to accommodate pipe size considerations. However, the difference in flange size is not related “pipe size considerations”, but instead, is employed to ensure almost instantaneous release of pressure from the steam pressure vessel. Accordingly, this is not an obvious feature apparent to one skilled in the art as opined by the Examiner. The remaining secondary references fail to overcome the deficiencies of Smith discussed above.

In view of the above, all of the claims in this case are believed to be in condition for allowance, notice of which is respectfully urged.

Respectfully submitted,

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DATE

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